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A LIVABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR WILDLIFE IS A QUALITY ENVIRONMENT FOR MAN

VOLUME V—NO. 5 MONTANA FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT MAY, 1970

Director's Column

PARK PLANNING

Montana's recreation and park system has a great deal to offer. The question is what do you offer to a society where seventy percent of the people live in metropolitan areas choked by traffic, suffocated by smog, poisoned by the water, deafened by noise and terrorized by crime . . . a society almost completely removed from the qualities of a park?

Visitors come to Montana to seek relief from the problems at home, to relax in an environment of clean air, clean water and open space. Accordingly, the system is designed to provide these things. Montana provides outdoor recreation opportunities in an esthetic, pleasing environment along with the opportunity to catch a wild trout from a clear, cold lake or stream. A leisurely float down one of the recreation waterways or a drive on the recreation road is also possible. State monuments provide protection for a part of Montana's colorful history. In addition, the Fish and Game Department attempts to interpret some of Montana's unique resources for further enjoyment of visitors, resident and non-resident alike.

In Montana's outdoor recreation areas, one will not find hookups for water, sewer and lights. There are no hot showers, laundromats, nor general stores. These conveniences are furnished by private enterprise just down the road. Our department has no wish to compete with them. We each offer a different kind of experience and this is the way it should be. Our department is not concerned with numbers of visitors, but with quality of each visit.

In order to continue to provide a quality experience in the out-of-doors, Montana's recreation and park areas have been classified into six types. Criteria to guide future acquisition and development have been provided for each.

State parks are included in the first of six categories into which areas administered by the Recreation and Parks Division are classified. The state parks are open space areas of unique scenery or outstanding natural features and provide a high quality recreation experience of an aesthetic, historical or scientified nature.

In the development of these exceptional areas, roads and other facilities are planned with sensitive regard for all natural features . . . for harmony with surroundings. Parks are kept in as near a natural condition as possible and care is taken to preserve aesthetic and ecological features and values.

Outstanding examples of Montana state parks are Lewis and Clark Caverns, the largest limestone caverns in the Northwest, and the Makoshika badlands of eastern Montana. At Lewis and Clark Caverns, forty-seven miles east of Butte, are found the beautiful stalactites and stalagmites characteristic of this unique geological phenomenon. On the plains to the east, near Glendive, are found the colorful and spectacular wind and water eroded formations of Makoshika. Other state parks are Lone Pine, West Shore, Lost Creek, and Medicine Rocks, sites which include scenic mountain vistas, picturesque lakeshore, canyon, waterfall and curious sandstone formations.

The numerous, easily accessible and multi-purpose state recreation areas are included in a second category. Many of these areas are located on lakes or streams and provide for water oriented recreation and heavy use. In view of these objectives, extensive alteration of the natural environment for roads and facilities may be necessary; but through careful planning, alteration is accomplished so as to retain aesthetic and ecological qualities.

In the northwest corner of the state, where cool, clear lakes abound, are found the greater number of recreation areas. Many are on Flathead Lake. Yet, in other parts of the state such notable recreation areas

as Canyon Ferry, Hell Creek and Deadman's Basin with their many facilities are close enough to population centers to serve the people of their respective areas.

In the third category are the state monuments, exemplary of the significant historical, archaeological and cultural events of the past. Development and management of these areas include installation of standard facilities in addition to projects for restoration and interpretation, including, in some instances, museums and dioramas. Fort Owen, Montana's oldest settlement; Bannack, historic gold mining town and first territorial capital; Madison Buffalo Jump and Pictograph Cave, significant archaeological sites; Chief Plenty Coup's home; and Chief Joseph Battleground of the Bear's Paw are among the more prominent sites.

Fourth, are the state recreational waterways, generally undeveloped rivers or streams possessing outstanding scenery and/or important historical features. Five state waterways have been designated including the Missouri and Flathead River Recreation Waterways, which are being considered for national recognition. Portions of Rock Creek, Smith, and Yellowstone Rivers are the other waterways.

Public accommodations for day use, camping, floating, fishing and other recreational activities are being provided at convenient stops along these rivers and streams. Management of these waterways includes maintenance of the public areas and some interpretation.

The Missouri River-Wolf Creek Canyon Recreation Road is the only representation, to date of the fifth category—state recreation roads and trails. Scenic and cultural attributes of certain Montana roads and trails, such as this one, warrant their protection and development. Development includes basic facilities and interpretation at key locations along the road or trail for the leisurely traveler.

The final area type contained within Montana's recreation and park system are the fishing access sites. These sites provide permanent public access to high quality fishing on numerous rivers, streams and lakes. Day use facilities are usually found at the numerous sites.

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The Madison Buffalo Jump State Recreation Area

By RICHARD ELLIS

The Madison Buffalo Jump Recreation Area is one of several state monuments which were established primarily because of their historical significance.

For those not familiar with this area, or the term "buffalo jump", it should be explained that this term describes a place where primitive hunters killed large numbers of buffalo by forcing the beasts to stampede over the edge of a cliff or rimrock and fall or "jump" to their deaths on the slopes below. Buffalo jumps are also referred to as "Pishkuns", a descriptive Blackfoot term translated as "deep-blood-kettle". Such a food gathering process was no doubt hazardous, but apparently quite productive.

Before the appearance of the white man, his horses, and his guns, this hunting method was of extreme importance to the Indians of the northwest prairies. It was by this method that large quantities of food as well as other essentials were gathered to make survival possible through the long winters. In a sense, the buffalo jump was often the key to existence for these tribes. Because of the extreme importance of jumps in early Indian culture, the Madison Jump has been preserved and developed as a representative example of such a site. Several hundred similar sites are known in Montana and many others in the surrounding states and provinces, but few can show a more complete picture of all the

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Edited by Vernon Craig

SORRY ABOUT THAT!

What was done to Laney Hanzel's article on SUMMER KOKANEE shouldn't happen to a fisheries biologist. We didn't really mean to call the lake trout a Dolly Varden. Sorry about that.

years ago or more from this very vantage point, hildren of prehistoric Indians likely watched an- gns of dust on the plains above. Then, from the and amid the din of shouting hunters and thunder- rrified buffalo plunged headlong over the cliffs to Masses of buried buffalo bones still tell the story.

"elements" of a jump and none can boast a more scenic setting.

The drive and many events leading up to it offer a rich and fascinating picture for the active imagination. The general activities associated with buffalo jumps have been reconstructed by anthropologists and archaeologists through the study of the physical evidence still in place at numerous sites, and through study of Indian legends passed down through many generations.

Blackfoot Indian legend tells us that the jumps were most often used in the fall of the year when buffalo cows were "prime" and when the nomadic tribes were gathering food for the severe northern winters. At the outset, ritual and mysticism played an initial roll. Religious leaders, often arrayed in buffalo costume, danced ancient dances and prayed for a successful hunt.

During these initial stages, a most important person, the runner, started out in search of buffalo. Trained from boyhood, the runner's swiftness, endurance, and an intimate knowledge of the habits of his prey, made it possible for him to excite the curiosity of the lead buffalo and start the whole herd moving toward the vicinity of the jump.

If the runner was successful, waiting scouts posted near the jump alerted the village. Hunters armed with stone-tipped weapons hurried to position themselves along either side of the route leading to the cliff while women and children likely sought some vantage point from which to watch the spectacle.

As the buffalo neared, tension and excitement grew. Often the buffalo sensed danger and broke away, but once within the wings of the jump, the chance of escape was nearly eliminated. Hunters crouching behind a flimsy fence of raised skin robes and low rock piles attempted to direct the flight of the bison while others rose up from behind, shouting and waving robes in an effort to stampede the animals into a headlong rush toward the cliff. As those in the lead sensed danger and attempted to turn back, the masses behind pushed the terrified and exhausted leaders over the edge only to follow and be killed or injured themselves by the bone-crushing fall. Hunters waiting below dispatched those still alive with stone clubs, spears, and arrows.

The dangers associated with the drive must have been great and injuries common, but as an interlude of excitement in the routine lives of a primitive tribe, this episode could hardly have been surpassed.

With the carcasses strewn on the slope below the cliff, the dirty, hard work of butchering began—the dirty, hard work that custom assigned to the women of the tribe.

Armed with stone knives, the women first removed the skins and cut off large chunks of meat that could be carried on their backs or by dog travois to the village site where more intensive processing took place.

Almost everything that primitive existence demanded was provided by the bison; their hides were used for shelter and clothing, their meat and marrow for food. In addition to these basics, a myriad of other items were obtained from this primitive commissary including tools, utensils, weapons, and toys.

It is likely that the ancient pedestrian Indians—those who traveled on foot prior to the introduction of the horse—depended to a large extent on the buffalo jump as a means of securing life's necessities.

A jump complex ideally consists of five elements in close association all of which contribute to the success of the operation. These elements are: (1) an adjacent grazing area from which the buffalo could be drawn or driven to the jump; (2) drive lanes consisting of long rows of low rock piles which were placed in converging lines and served as flimsy "walls" of a tunnel to concentrate and direct the buffalo toward the jump; (3) the jump or precipice itself over which the animals were driven; (4) the slope at the foot of the cliff where crippled animals were dispatched and where initial butchering was done; (5) an occupation site where the Indians lived during the time the jump was in use and where final butchering, drying of meat, and preparing of hides took place.

All five of these basic components of a pishkun are present at the Madison site. The grazing area is the extensive rolling plain extending from the breaks of the Madison River eastward to the Gallatin Valley. A rather extensive system of drive lanes has recently been found extending from the edge of the plains down toward the rim of the jump. The rimrock forming the jump drops at least 30 feet or more to the long steep slope where the dead and injured tumbled to a stop and where masses of bones are still to be found under the surface. The occupation site at the Madison Jump is marked by the existence of numerous rings of rock, commonly thought to have been associated with tipis or lodges of the primitive hunters. This village site is located within one-quarter mile of the jump and was undoubtedly the scene of feverish activity following a successful drive.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Although the basic elements of a typical pishkun are present at the Madison site, and a general picture of the activity that once took place there can be reconstructed, little is known about the Indians that actually used it. Even the period of history during which it was used is debatable.

In an attempt to answer these and other questions, two professional

archaeological "digs" have been conducted at the Madison site. The first was in 1958 under the direction of Dr. Malouf of the University of Montana, and the second in 1968 under Dr. Taylor, also from the University. Both digs were of a preliminary nature and served primarily to indicate that a much more intensive study should be made.

In addition to these professional digs, amature artifact hunters have for many years turned over the soil at the jump site. This indiscriminate digging has, unfortunately, created havoc with the natural sequence of cultural deposits and will make the job of the professional more difficult if not impossible.

Some general conclusions have been reached, however. It is generally felt that buffalo jumps were not in common use until somewhere around 2,000 years ago—perhaps because of a long period of drought and a relative scarcity of bison in the northwest plains region prior to that time. Evidence indicates that the Madison Jump is at least 2,000 years old, and possibly much older. Following the introduction of the horse to this region in the early to mid-1700's, the importance of the pishkun in the plains Indian economy declined. The chase on horseback largely replaced the drive as a means of securing buffalo. It is believed, however, that limited, modified use was made of some buffalo jumps even up into the 1800's.

The question of which Indians used the Madison Buffalo Jump is also open to speculation. It is most likely that several different tribes used the site over the many hundreds of years it was active. The Northern Shoshoni apparently occupied this area during the pre-historic period we are concerned with and probably made most frequent use of the site. Western tribes, however, such as the Nez Perce, Flathead, and Pend d'-Oreille may have made periodic use of the jump. In later years, as use of jumps was declining, Blackfeet and Crow tribes began pushing from the north and east and may have made some limited use of the site.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONUMENT

Even though many of the details have yet to be worked out, and much is based on speculation, there is still a fascinating story to be told. For this reason, the Montana Fish and Game Department has undertaken a development project, financed in part by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, designed to increase the enjoyment of the area and provide an understanding of an extremely important aspect of Indian culture.

For many years, a small group of people in the Three Forks and Bozeman area have been aware of the unique historic value of the Madison Jump. Through their interest, the Fish and Game Department became involved, and during the summer of 1969, began construction of an access road, parking area, and the development of a well. In addition, an open-air shelter building was constructed which is designed to house an interpretive display telling the fascinating story of the buffalo jump and associated activities.

The interpretation and directive signing will be completed during the summer of 1970 and it is hoped that many interested persons will enjoy a visit to the site. The Madison Buffalo Jump is located just seven miles off Interstate 90 between Bozeman and Three Forks. The visitor should turn south at the Logan interchange, six miles east of Three Forks, and follow the county road seven miles to the site, where man has been a periodic visitor for unknown ages.

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